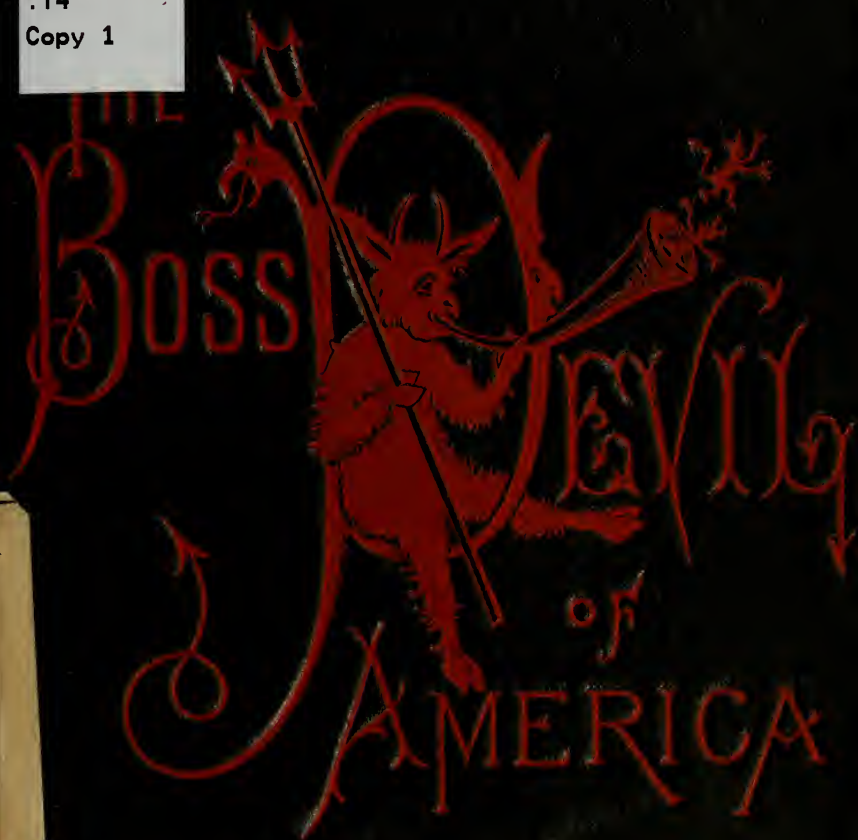


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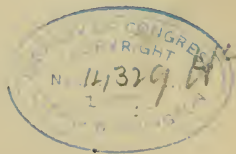
THE BOSS

DEVIL OF

AMERICA.

BY  
*Charles R. Smith*  
JEAN CLARKE,

AUTHOR OF "THAT YOUNG MAN."



BOSTON:  
PUBLISHED BY N. H. WHITNEY & CO.

1878.

1877

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE.

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IN measured line to suit my whim, without  
The hope or wish that they who read will call  
It poetry, this little book I give.  
This said is quite enough — and less would do —  
Of introductory, so called and named,  
But never read except by her or him  
Who writes. Thus saying, let me sign my name  
In due respect, esteem, and love, and hope,  
Most truly yours,

BOSS DEVIL.

BOSTON, New Year's, 1878.



THE  
BOSS DEVIL OF AMERICA.

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I. — PRELUDE.

FAIR maid ! whom some call sweet, and sweet  
if good ;

With virgin blushes pure and rich and red  
And warm ; unplighted love, yet true because  
Untried ; unfaded eye, yet bright and soft  
And good, its own most certain snare and bait  
Of ruin ; smiling face and yearning heart ;  
Prospective wife, loved and loving much, —  
Fair maid, to thee I speak and write.

Young man ! possessed of strength, with greatest  
strength  
To fall ; with hopes elated high above

Intent of good, or virtue of resolve ;  
With signs of greatness, outward many bright,  
But inward few ; with force of mind and soul,  
And build of frame, each great in what each most  
May yet attain ; beset with pleasures good  
And ill, — to thee no less this theme I pen,  
That, by revealing who I am, thyself  
To thee I may present as well, and more,  
That thou mayst know the man whose easy prey,  
At cruel cost, thou art.

But, to be brief, fair maid, young man, or both ;  
The young, the old as well, and all who read  
On trains, in halls, at home, or as a guest ;  
Equal to all, with much to favor all,  
On printed page I come, in measured lines,  
Not welcomed more because in common verse,  
Nor less, but rather more disguised.

Of all the devils seen or hid or felt  
On earth, by men or maids, — their numbers  
great, —

THE BOSS I am. To my imperious rule  
And sway, to every impulse, word, or wish,  
All legions doomed or dooming by their pow'r,

In ready homage wait on me.  
In every act of life's broad stage,  
The high and low, the rich and poor, the great,  
The small, of every sort, come trooping round  
My feet, to crown me Victor, DEVIL BOSS ;  
Thyself a subject, willing or compelled,  
Of my exalted crown. Such is my rank.

My birth I'll speak of later on ; my age  
As well, or mention not at all, as may  
Best suit my wish and plan. My realm,  
Already told or hinted quite enough,  
Will soon be clear. Thus briefly introduced,  
Boss DEVIL I appear ! and, leading on,  
Will wind through wooded paths of real fact,  
Of virtue shipwrecked, honor lost or won,  
Of maiden's hopes deferred and trust deceived,  
Of man's high purpose blighted or retrieved,  
Of home's cemented circle sundered far,  
Or saved.

## II. — FAIR ELSA.

No longer girl, yet scarce a maid in years ;  
In growth of heart, and mind, and form, full ripe  
And pure, fair Elsa loved. Her beauty, rare

And rich, invited gaze and lust. Her face  
With freshest blush, in tinted hues of pink  
And white, was always bright.

Her smiles of love,  
In golden sunbeams flowed, in gentle waves  
Of inspiration warm. Her auburn hair  
Of curls, in silken tresses, hung or lay  
In ample luxury.

Her form, not large,  
Nor small, but rounded out in perfect shape  
And symmetry, excelled perfection's truest moulds  
Of fancied thought.

Her voice, in accents sweet,  
Broke softest music on the ear and heart,  
Enchanting one and charming both. To tell  
It all at once, in her combined the whole  
Of beauty, youth, and grace.

Her rank of noble birth improved on all  
By gilding all with wealth and lineage-fame ;  
Her noble gifts of mind, and soul, and grace,  
The wisest Giver had bestowed in trust, —

A trust she would have kept, had I not come  
To tempt, and steal, and curse, and blight, and  
    blast,  
And waste.

Her easy lot sped on and on,  
Each day beholding steps advancing high  
In deeds of self-improving culture and  
Unselfish love.

Thus born, thus reared, thus blessed,  
And thus improved, — an object rare and rich  
For angels' praise and devils' bitter hate, —  
Fair Elsa lived.

Her ruin fully planned  
Was my delight, since she was fairest of  
The fair, and purest of the pure ; and I  
The chief of devils boss, the ardent task  
No other hands save mine could execute.

### III. — YOUNG ROGER.

Young Roger, bright with college honors, came  
From class, in graduation due, to try  
With tact and talent, love and wit, life's hard  
And surging tide.

From callings great and wise,  
And multiform, he chose his own delight,  
The art of physic, — allopathic school.

Commanding, tall, erect, of noble form  
And noble mien, and mind and soul in all  
Complete, he stood in youth's gateway of life,  
In equipage and armor for the fight  
Complete as well.

With aims above, beyond,  
The common herd, he drew the lines to rule.  
His life by wisdom's plans approved, confirmed.  
The rules he made to be observed, obeyed,  
Were few, but firm and good : The truth to speak,  
To seek the good to do and fellowship,  
To hate the wrong, were fundamental lines  
He would in turn observe.

And why do less ?  
Of humble, poor but honest birth, his own  
Unaided way he'd pressed to this fair start.  
With such a life, though short, behind, with such  
A prospect yet untried, but easy to  
Attain, ahead, when all invites that way.



## IV. — YOUNG ROGER'S LOVE.

When scarce eighteen, while yet in junior class,  
Young Roger, still in sophomore warmth  
Of youth, his honest heart and noble hand  
Had laid at Elsa's feet, for which she gave  
Her own betrothed. Of all rewards his life  
Had crowned, this one was richest far.

To win a love so pure, a heart so high,  
Was more than victor's boast. Her veins enriched  
By royal blood, her heart of love enlarged,  
Enshrined by all devotion's brightest fires;  
Her mind illumined, trained, informed;  
Her beauty unsurpassed, and yet excelled  
By grace,—a prize indeed! of earthly gifts  
The best.

But greater than her worth  
Of beauty, grace, and form, and higher than  
Her hopes of heaven, and deeper than her trust  
In God,—outmeasured all, her love bestowed,—  
Young Roger's best reward, and highest prize.

Nor was fair Elsa's love without a full

Return. The heart of him, less great in name,  
Less reared by wealth, but nothing less a heart  
For all, it loved as strong, as warm, as great,  
If not as pure ; and loving thus he loved  
Not less than she.

V. — YOUNG ROGER'S FAULT.

Young Roger's fault was my reward, and more —  
But say no more just now. The heart that loved  
Its treasure, altogether won, yet half  
Secured, with such unselfish wish and plan,  
Lacked less in generous deeds than just, though  
just  
It strove its blessings to impart.

It was  
Not wrong that Roger should have many friends, —  
A right availing much for me, — nor wrong  
That he and they should often meet and chat  
At hall or club, if meeting there implied  
No other fellowship than kindly words  
Or greeting warm ; nor in the thoughts and words  
Of many men called wise and good, was wrong, —  
Their social glass of wine, or stronger drinks,

When kind occasion warmly bent that way.  
In such amusements, wise and good, if good  
And wise, and right if numbers weigh, and best  
For my success, lay Roger's fault, the old  
And pious people will insist. If right,  
Then right ; if wise, then wise ; if good, then good ;  
Or fault, then fault : whichever will appear.

VI. — FAIR ELSA'S FAULT, IF FAULT.

Fair Elsa, faultless, yet in fault, if wise  
And trusted oracles are true, erred most,  
If erred at all, in loving far too well.  
If truest God she loved, her love in this  
Was weak, engaging less than half a heart and half  
A mind. Her rank, the riches of her grace,  
Her undivided love, her hopes and best  
Resolves, her time, her prayers, her strength, and all  
She had to give, in giving which was right, —  
And law of right was love, — she fondly threw  
At Roger's not unworthy feet. Alas !  
And not alas ! Sometimes such love is best,  
Sometimes the worst. Alas, when spent on him  
Whom I embrace, though worthy in himself ;  
And not alas, when borne for him in whom

My intrigue comes to nought, a victim chained.  
In this, — if this be wrong or right, the same, —  
In this was Elsa's source of grief, if grief  
She had at all.

VII. — YOUNG ROGER'S MISFORTUNE.

Misfortune, — born of fault if sages tell  
The proverbs of their songs in truth ; and born  
By chance, or sent by God, if sages lie, —  
But, all the same, misfortunes come to vex  
And to annoy. A plan put forth to shun  
Their stings fails in the plan ; for all, the small,  
The great, at some time, and by far, the time  
Most inconvenient to their ease and wish,  
Must fret beneath their scourge.

Young Roger, no  
Exception to the rule, met his. 'Twas not  
Affliction's hand ; 'twas not unvalued love,  
Nor broken trust, nor lash of scandal's tongue :  
But debt, its food. His generous heart made  
friends ;  
His generous deeds increased their ranks ; and,  
thus

Increased, expense entailed, unjustly met,  
Or met by putting off.

His practice grew  
And thrived; but faster grew the wants (not  
needs),  
And louder grew the calls demanding means  
To hold the wide-extending social list  
Of daily entertaining friends. Perplexed,  
Annoyed, young Roger, ill at rest,  
Stood hard in need. His wants however known  
To me, it matters not: enough to say  
His needs my pleasant duty was to meet  
And satisfy, or, failing quite in this,  
His wants to pacify. Philanthropy  
Could move my heart, BOSS DEVIL though I was,  
But only when its Christian deeds of love  
Gave cloak to base designs.

In Roger's want  
I saw a way to Elsa's heart. The route  
Was long and wind-about, and intricate  
With turns: yet, had the way been easier,  
Less int'resting the task.

The end

Was Elsa's fall, — her virtue to abase.  
This fully done, and I had reached the goal  
Of devil's highest wish. No dart of lust  
Or thought of shame had yet imbued her heart :  
In holy thoughts, in purest wish, her life  
In gentle flow, swept calmly on to God.

All other men, most other maids, my base  
Designs could bring to shame, with greater ease,  
But with less glory crowned. With some, and not  
A few, the distance left to fall would cause  
But little bruise : with her, embracing all  
That's pure and true and good, the distance would  
Be great, the fall in ruin grand. These thoughts  
And motives led me on. With these I sped  
To Roger's aid.

#### IX. — YOUNG ROGER'S SIN.

Misfortune — born of fault, or no, to me  
It matters not — was brooding sin through my  
Adventurous aid. Young Roger lived, — and lived  
In style, — from Elsa's proud and stately home,  
In distance many miles, say hundreds six  
Or more.

Though Elsa's capture, fall, and shame  
Was chief of my delights to win, I chose,  
As most expedient to my plan and aim,  
To tarry close by him, in friendly aid,  
If thus I could appear. And thus I did  
Pretend in foul disguise, deceit, until  
In Roger's name, for Roger's sake, she heard  
My fearful plea, and blushed with shame,  
But blushing fell, yet falling more to my  
Disgrace than her distress, and this was great.

Supplying Roger's wants,  
I multiplied by many fold and pow'r  
Their number and their force ; and this, that I  
Might make demand for much I had and wished  
To give. I made him many friends, if friends  
The world will stoop to so exalt by name.  
Nay, this and more ; I brought him pleasures new  
And odd, — too odd to tell ; enjoyments sweet,  
If sweet can turn to painful sting of shame ;  
Amusements rare to public gaze, or sight  
Of honest, pious men ; and over all  
The mystic veil of secrecy I spread,  
Which gave it double charm.

In this strange world behind the 'screens, —strange  
only to  
The good, —where night is day, and day is  
night,  
And charms are multiplied, increased, improved,  
By artificial light, I led at will  
Young Roger's wayward feet. He followed on  
With hesitating step, unsteady gait ;  
And, when reluctant to proceed, his fears  
Or doubts of wrong were lost in social wine.

Thus on, and on, I led young Roger to  
His sin, his doom, unconscious he was led.  
The way was long, and leading down in scale  
At every step, but with such easy slant  
As not to cause alarm.

Had Roger fell  
With rapid pace, no wrecks to mark his path  
But his, slight then were done ; but, moving on  
In slow advance, the stream of ruin spread  
In wide expanse, including hundreds in  
The train, and thus worked double loss. In this  
I managed well



Impulsive, yet

With firm command of self, as some would say,  
He sinned by night, and worked with honest skill  
By day ; and boasted how his freaks of fun,  
Restrained by systematic rule or law,  
Took nothing from the value or result  
Of practised toil. And so, dear reader, if  
Boss devil you'd become, first learn to lead  
Your victims by the hand of self-control,  
When falsely reckoned so. With care and pains  
I worked to show young Roger all his good,  
And cover all his fault. 'Twas easy done :  
With skilful ease I placed his life in line  
With that of better men, and proved his own  
By far the best, by far supreme.

At length

He sinned outright, and sinned to suffer much.  
His sin entailed disgrace ; to cover which  
Bred crime ; to cover which he spent his life  
For nought, and fell at last, a proper claim  
To retribution's doom, to pine and die.

His sin was this (in myth it must be told,  
Or give offence to those who read ; which means,

To steal the author's bread) : Within his heart  
I bred a passion great and deep and strong,  
The birthright of the flesh, and proper, too,  
For man : its presence is not sin, but wise  
And good, if wisely held by wise restraint.

Young Roger wooed forbidden fruit, and ate  
In passion, not in love. In this he wronged  
Fair Elsa's trust, — the less or more, decide  
Which way you will ; but wronged it foul, —and  
wronged

Himself as well, and more. Sharp on the track  
Of this his sin — another's shame — came twin  
Disgrace, to cover which demanded crime.  
Alas ! and crime stood near at hand.

#### X. — YOUNG ROGER'S CRIME.

That sin is crime but older grown, is plain  
To most who read, and pain to most who sin  
Too long, I may assert in peace, and you  
May prove by deeds, in grief. Thus Roger did  
At my command, request, or wish. But in  
His peril I came, a friend, or foe disguised,  
And lent, unbid, black counsel, varnished bright.

He listened well; which was for me to win,  
And him to lose. "For Elsa's sake," I said,  
"For Elsa's love, for Elsa's future hope  
And joy, cut this one brittle thread of life, —  
Though in the stroke you sever two, — and thus  
Dam back the floods which threaten deluge to  
Thy name and hers. In this affair, use one  
Of many tricks to thy profession known,  
And let her quickly die, with hers and yours, —  
A secret better in the grave than out.  
In this be wise, and follow my advice.  
Make haste! the clouds of shame appear."

"Not I!"

Young Roger said. "Be sin my shame, not  
crime

My woe! This deed to impulse strange I owe,  
Or rather to thy wrong advice. Had I  
Not met thee, boss of devils, true thou art,  
And heeded thy persuasive counsels, wrong  
And black, but gilded o'er, this shame would not  
Be mine, or hers by deed of mine; nor had  
Fair Elsa's love been treated thus. Depart,  
Boss Devil! leave! nor speak again to me!  
We part to-day for life."

“Young Roger, hold!”

Was my reply. “Your sorrows reel your brain.  
Think for a moment of your words, I pray,  
Ere you are lost. ‘Be sin my shame, not crime  
My woe,’ sounds well; but hark! Thy sin and  
hers

Is growing crime, and soon will ripen red  
In harvest of disgrace. Thy sin to-day  
To-morrow is thy crime. Between one crime  
And two, without disgrace, is difference more  
To be preferred, if both are lost in death,  
Though death be murder, than to suffer foul  
Disgrace, and sweat beneath the penalty  
Of law. Do I not counsel wisely, man?  
If so, give heed: if no, ignore. But weigh  
My wisdom well.”

A pause prolonged; and Roger asked, —  
“And how can this be done to leave no chance  
Or clew by which the deed may come to light?”

“Pshaw! Roger, stop!  
Ask not of me to teach what best is known  
To thee. I counsel what to do, not how.  
A thousand ways I might contrive, and more;

But why should I perform things easy to  
Yourself? The task is light. But come, I'll aid;  
And, while we plan, let's drink, that plan we may  
With greater ease."

What speed!

In scarce two years I'd led young Roger on  
From noble, pious youth, to social glass;  
From social glass, to deeds of sin and shame;  
From sin and shame, to plotting murder with  
No other object than a view to shun disgrace.  
Such progress cheered my heart.

He drank of wine, at my request, that we  
Might reason well; yet held aloof from crime  
In doubt and fear, and said, —

"I'd rather die, —  
Die thrice, — than load myself with guilt by this  
Tremendous deed. Contrive some other way;  
Suggest some plan less black."

"I see no other way,  
The time draws near when Elsa's hand in yours  
Will join in wedlock's holy bond, — a bond

In which alone relief to thee can come.  
Her wealth at thy command, these irksome debts  
Will disappear. Then, Roger, thou canst raise  
Thy head, in manly claim to more respect.  
Without her love, without her hand, without  
Fair Elsa's gold, thy doom is now complete.  
There is no other way. This dreaded deed  
Alone can bring relief."

XI. — FAIR ELSA'S CONSTANT LOVE.

Come, reader, turn

With me to Elsa's home, that we may bring  
Her life down through two years elapsed since last  
We spake her praise.

When Roger left his class

For active life, he pressed her hand to wed ;  
But she demurred, and pleaded youth a cause  
Why both should wait. In this her patience was  
Not wise, though nothing else a proof of wise  
Resolve. Had she gone forth with Roger from  
The start, I had been robbed of both, alas !  
Her virtue made the gap through which a stream  
Of ruin flowed, to turn the wheels of death.

Two years and more must come and go ere she  
Became a wife : meanwhile young Roger's hand  
Would lay foundations for a home, where love,  
And joy, and peace might reign to crown and bless  
Their coming wedded life.

About his task  
He set in haste, with motives high and great.  
To his resolves I lent my aid, and with  
What issues you have seen, and shall see more.

But through these waiting years young Roger oft  
Should lean on Elsa's love. In ways all good —  
A thousand quite or more — she came to him,  
Revealed in acts of constancy. Her pen,  
Devoted as the days and nights are true to time,  
Did much. Each letter filled with Christian words  
Of counsel wise, but less of counsel than  
Of love, brought inspirations big with strength  
And hope, but these were shipwrecked, cast  
Away on seas of ruddy wine, without  
The roaring of a single storm.

But letters were  
By no means all : mottoes and precious gifts

Of needle-work, each traced with lines of skill  
And patient toil ; each, token of her love, —  
These gifts from hands so fair, these lines from  
mind

So pure, and hopeful wishes, well from heart  
So true and good, had been enough, and more,  
To guide young Roger on in purity  
Of life, had I not crossed his path, or clasped  
His hand.

Besides these gifts and written interchange  
Of love, five greetings, lasting weeks, increased  
Their love, confirmed their hopes, and perfected  
Their trust. At each of these young Roger's  
heart

Renewed its vows ; his lips alone declared  
The lie of constant past. Fair Elsa — blind  
With perfect trust ; imperfect since unwise ;  
Unwise because abused, deceived — believed,  
Suspected not, and loved in majesty  
Of soul sublime and great.

Thus lived

Fair Elsa, true and good and pure, not once  
Suspecting less of him than she herself



Could be, but hoping more. Thus waiting long,  
And praying much, poor Elsa was deceived.  
Alas ! if only that were all !

XII. — YOUNG ROGER'S VICTIM.

Poor Nellie Waite, an orphan child, at ten,  
Was placed at school, through friendly aid. En-  
dowed

With voice of song, and blessed with music in  
Her soul, she learned to play and sing with grace  
And ease, and perfect tone. To teach what she  
Had learned was her delight, and more, her means  
Of livelihood. Nellie was young and fair,  
Possessed of beauty, wit, and tact to match ;  
Well suited to enjoy the good, but not  
Well suited to endure the bad, of life.

From self-supporting toil she soon became  
By far too self-depending. Nellie Waite  
And I and Roger met at social dance,  
Or ball full-dress. I'd met young Roger long,  
And many times, before ; sweet Nellie once ;  
Not more. My interest in them both was quite  
The same, — their overthrow and fall. At twelve,

The midnight hour, the whirling dances broke  
In intermission. Lunch was served in rooms  
Across the entry hall. Thence, to refresh  
And rest, young Roger, leading Nellie on  
His arm, repaired. My time had come. The wine  
Was introduced. The modest lady shook  
Head in kind reproof; yet wine, champagne,  
Was only wine, not more, and why complain?  
Thus reasoned out she said, —

“Kind Roger, sir,  
You drink, I’m pardoned to observe.  
The wine looks well, and drink if drink you must.  
But, as for me, I must excuse myself  
With your consent.”

“Miss Waite, you joke, or play  
With words. This wine is light, and could not  
harm  
A creature good and fair as thou. *Your health!*  
Drink that with *me!*”

“Just *half a glass*: not more,  
Kind Roger. *Come, obey!* I dare not trust  
In taking more, or even this, I’m bound  
To say.”

“Pshaw ! Nellie, drink ! This ruddy wine  
Like water flows, as harmless too. A ball  
Is less a ball excepting wine. I hold  
Myself to answer for your ill, if ill  
Results.”

Young Roger reasoned well.  
In this my training was complete. She drank,  
And, drinking, fell in honor of my name,  
And rank as Boss.

XIII. — MURDER, ONE OR TWO.

At my advice, at my command, or wish,  
Or counsel, — one or all, — young Roger gave  
Wise heed (if crime is wise) ; and sought at once,  
With speedy hand, to cut the thread of life.  
The work was soon complete. His victim fell  
In death, — as at his wicked will she fell  
In life to deeds of shame, — with one faint cry  
Or wail of grief, unheard by men. Her pain  
Was great but brief.

“This awful thing is done,  
And done by me,” soliloquized or thought

Young Roger, as alone he sat one night,  
Refusing to be comforted by wine,  
Or wine's resource. "My plan succeeds: that's  
plain.

Hear what the people think, and what they say,  
And what the papers print. It's false; but lies  
Are better far than truth, when used to hide  
Much crime. They print, with head-lines black  
and long,  
The tale of Nellie's grief; all wrong, but right  
For me. It runs this wise:—

" 'THE SUICIDE  
OF NELLIE WAITE! THOUGH FAIR IN LIFE, YET  
FOUL  
IN DEATH. SHE DIES TO HIDE HER CRIME.'

"Thus ran

The head-lines, bold as false; and others quite  
As these were added on to give display.  
Then followed lines in common print; to wit,—

" 'We're pained to be compelled to write of things  
So sad. Fair Nellie Waite, whom many knew,  
'And knew to love, in some dread evil hour  
Gave heed to wrong advice. She fell! To hide

Her fall, she drank the fatal drug, and died.  
The man — not man, but beast — who led her on  
To shame is strangely hid from view. She leaves  
No words behind by which to trace him out.  
Yet we predict his villany will be  
Revealed in time, and he to punishment  
Be surely brought in chains.' ”

Young Roger read,  
And trembled more. The prophecy might yet  
Be verified ! He shook with fear. I came  
That way, on duty bent, and offered wine.  
He drank, and drank again. This nerved his  
mind,  
And gave him strength. His fear o’ercome or  
gone,  
His conscience dumb, he walked erect, and smiled  
A victor’s smile.

Poor Nellie’s death came not  
By her own hand. Perplexed with grief, and  
warned  
Of coming shame, she counselled Roger for  
Escape, relief, or plan to overcome  
The sad mishap. He gave attentive ear,

And then advice, and then a phial of death.  
He called it by some other name. The dose  
He ordered her, in undivided form,  
To take just after secret evening prayer.  
By this she was to gain relief ; but by  
The same she died. Thus managed Roger well ;  
Or rather I, not he. This was my plan,  
Not his. But thus died Nellie Waite ; and thus  
Have thousands, fair and good as she, by me  
Been led to early, shameful death.

XIV. — FAIR ELSA'S DREAM, AND MORE.

The night of Nellie's death, fair Elsa dreamed  
Herself in Nellie's place. She thought her shame  
Was hers, and that some fiend, the author of  
Her woe, had sought to take her life ; in which  
Attempt by poisoned draught his purpose reached.  
The fiend she did not know or recognize.  
In one short night she dreamed the same thrice  
o'er,  
And morning found her weak from fear.

She wrote

At once, revealing all to Roger's mind.

The dream, she said, was plainest at the point  
Of death. 'Twas hard to die. She tried to call  
For aid, but nothing aiding came. She cried  
In sobs of grief, not loud but deep, for him  
Whose slave, by dream, she had become. But no  
Response from him. At length she died; instead  
Of which she woke. With this, fair Elsa asked,  
“My love, what can it mean?” and closed.

Such news  
Brought grief and hot remorse to Roger's soul.  
He sank in stupor, self-condemned, and would  
Have died from self-inflicting wounds, had I  
Not sped to bring redress and cheer.

“My dear  
Sir Roger,” first I said, “what means this woe,  
This sad complain? Why languish here? With  
thee  
There's nothing wrong, but much to cheer.”

“Foul fiend!”  
He answered back, “the worst of devils thou!  
Depart! Return no more! I hate thy name,  
Thy face, thy voice! I would that thou wert  
dead.

No more thy councils shall I heed, no more  
Thy poisoned gifts receive. Depart, depart!  
O cursed fiend, depart!"

"Why, Roger, wilt  
Thou thus abuse my name, reject my aid?  
When fast in trouble bound, with coming shame,  
In floods quite mountain high, I found thee lone  
And helpless, in much want, thou didst not scorn  
To thank for aid. I gave my counsels free,  
And counselled wise. To-night you're free by  
might  
Of mine, and durst thou scorn me thus? Beware!  
I have thee in my power somewhat. As friend,  
I wait to serve thy needs; but make me foe,  
And chains of fearful strength shall bind thee  
low."

"Boss Devil, leave my sight! This once, not  
more,  
I'll drink with thee at my expense. It is  
The parting draught. I trace thy hand in ills  
Gone by. To thee my every fault and sin  
I owe: to thee I'll owe no more but hate.  
But come, we'll drink farewell, and part."



“’Tis done,  
Whate’er thou wilt. To be dismissed is hard :  
To be dismissed and then recalled is not  
So bad. To-day I’ll go, obedient to  
Thy word. When time brings sober thoughts of  
this,  
My aid will be recalled. I venture this,  
And wait ; meanwhile, good-day.”

## XV. — YOUNG ROGER REFORMS SOMEWHAT.

Young Roger, rid of me, by wise resolve —  
But wiser still if longer kept — began  
Anew. ’Twas time, indeed ! He hid the past .  
As best he could, and best was poor enough.  
He saw approaching ruin in the glass,  
Or dram, — approaching ? nay, at hand ! Deep in  
His soul he cursed the social glass of wine  
Or beer, and swore by all his sin and crime  
Already done, by all the good he yet  
Might do, by all he dared to hope or wish,  
By all fair Elsa’s worth, never, never,  
Again to touch or taste the liquid fire !

Young Roger reasoned well, resolved as well,

But did not carry out his honest wish  
Beyond the mere resolve ; but fell again,  
And rose, and re-resolved, and fell again ;  
And rose again to make his vows anew, —  
But vows he never acted out beyond  
The wish. Thus going on he paved his way  
To hell with good resolves, but leading none  
The less direct for that.

In struggles hard

To gain relief from my infernal grasp,  
He battled well with treacherous foe, but fell  
As all must fall who dare to meet my sword  
In strife. He gained, at times, some vantage-  
ground,  
And seemed a while to win the fight. For weeks,  
And once for months, his lips were kept in peace,  
from all  
Unholy liquors dry. But lo ! when least  
Expecting me, I came, — not by myself,  
But one (and not the least) of many, all  
His friends, professed.

Yet Roger did as well

As most could do. He placed the cup beneath

His feet for weeks in stretch, and grew in strength  
Of moral grace. Thus, step by step, the man  
Reformed somewhat ; yet all the while in my  
Control, with my consent. Had I not wished  
To pull down better men, and women too,  
With Roger's fall, I had not yielded thus.

XVI. — FAIR ELSA PREPARES TO WED.

A few short months, not more, the wedding-day  
Would come ; therewith young Roger's merry  
smiles

Once more appear to cheer and bless her life.  
She had not seen his face for many days,  
Or pressed his hand, or kissed his lips ; but soon  
She'd meet the chosen one, with him to part  
No more.

In busy preparation for  
The nuptial day, approaching near and fast,  
Fair Elsa spent the few remaining weeks.  
At much expense, with greater skill and taste,  
At length the wardrobe was complete, of silks  
The richest and the best, all other things  
To match. Fair Elsa's outfit was excelled  
By nothing save her love.

The father gave  
Of worldly goods, to bless his child and him  
She loved, without restraint, — piano square  
And grand, the richest silver-plate, and gold  
A fortune quite, or more. The loving, kind,  
Devoted, wealthy father could not have done more,  
And would not have done less.

Fair Elsa loved  
Young Roger all a noble heart could love,  
And longed to spread, a willing offering, at  
His feet, the least of all, her wealth ; and more,  
A long, devoted life of loving, kind,  
And generous deeds.

For such unselfish work  
An opportunity came soon enough, —  
Alas, too soon ! With Roger kneeling at  
My shrine of lust and wine, and she at his,  
But blind to all because deceived ; — with this  
I prospered well.

XVII. — YOUNG ROGER WEDS.

The wedding-morn had come. Young Roger,  
bright

As varnished, gilded sin can look, when at  
Its best, came forth to meet his bride. He looked  
A very king, but must have felt much worse.  
Fair Elsa, blushing, pure and white and sweet, —  
Her only fault, she loved too well, not wise  
Enough, — came forth in queenly grace, to meet  
Her lord, once worthy much, but now much less.

The solemn vows were made. To love, and her  
Alone ; to cheer with constant hand, defend,  
Protect, support, forsaking all but her, —  
He promised well : performing half as well  
Would have been manly, placed in line with what  
He did, or failed to do. Yet promised he  
As all men do, in truth, in hope, in love.

Fair Elsa also vowed to love, revere,  
Obey, respect, and serve devoted, to  
The end of life, till death should part her hand  
From his. To keep her vow, her solemn pledge,  
She consecrated body, mind, and soul ;  
And, when she fell, she fell defending truth,  
Protecting virtue, and rejecting vice.

Thus vowing, both were wed ; and, wedding, both

Were one, or should have been ; and were, except  
What I of him possessed, the union of their hearts  
To mar.

Fair Elsa, led by such a man, —  
'Twas shame ! Young Roger, leading such a bride,  
So pure, so good, for him too good by far, —  
Was also shame ! But leading thus, and led,  
They started forth as man and wife, — she good  
And true ; he trying to be quite the same,  
But trying much in vain, because of me.

XVIII. — FAIR ELSA'S FIRST-BORN.

In course of time, the marriage brought forth one  
To make the number three, and bless the whole.  
With kiss on kiss, in multitude beyond  
All count, the new-made parents crowned their  
    babe,  
And loved it much. The young and sweet  
And anxious mother pressed it to her heart,  
Then held it up to God, and prayed that he  
Would mould its tender heart, and guide its life,  
In love. This prayer might have been answered  
    by

The gift of much beyond the prayer, had I  
Not, later, stepped between the child, its God,  
And her.

The child was no small blow to my  
Success. It won young Roger's heart from me,  
To home ; and oft upon his knee, in love,  
He fondled him, his infant son, in great  
Delight. This holy pleasure almost won  
Young Roger from the cup ; for which, in turn  
Of hateful spite, I bent with greater rage  
To ruin all, with special aim at her  
Whose greatest pride was mother. With intent,  
No less to claim the child when older grown  
As my reward, that all, with all who might  
Thereafter come to them by birth, might meet  
Below to swell the drinker's woeful, dark,  
Eternal home.

XIX. — MY DEEP DESIGN.

To make sure work, to be in time, I called  
To aid young Roger's scientific mind.  
In practice wise for me, but woe to all  
For whom physicians thus prescribe, he lent

His aid. Fair Elsa's frame was weak and worn,  
And needed strength. Her doctor-husband, quick  
To apprehend the want, was ready to  
Supply. The chief of which he gave his wife  
To bring renewing vigor on, to give  
Her health and strength, was brandy, wine, and  
gin,  
In turns, to meet the complicated needs.

Such treatment filled the mother's breast with  
seeds  
Of wicked appetite, by nature's plan  
Transmitted to the child. My double scheme  
Worked well. The nursing mother thrived in  
strength,  
And gained in health. The threefold treatment  
sowed  
In her, and him she fed — as noble, honest moth-  
ers will —  
With milk her yielding breast supplied, the germs  
Of sin and shame.

With such a plan contrived  
With doctor's aid, — and doctors aid me much  
Beyond their knowing, — I could see her doom



And his, and his she nursed, approaching near.  
Prospered my work of death, Boss Devil's only  
Joy, and only bread.

XX. — SUSPICION WORKS FOR ME.

I work in many ways, through many men,  
And by a thousand faults or traits of wrong.  
At times by envy's hand I make much game :  
A jealous mind or heart is always worth  
Much pains to me. Ambition, rightly watched,  
Will yield returns of human woe complete.  
Not less suspicion's arm will turn the wheels  
Of crime, if armed by my control. Thus did  
Suspicion now, as you may see.

A month

Had scarcely passed since Nellie Waite — by her  
Own hand, as people thought ; but really by  
The fatal drug young Roger gave with foul  
Design — passed on from life, when, lo ! and sad  
To meditate, a clergyman, young and pure,  
And brilliant none the less, and pious more,  
Was thought to have contrived the shame which  
led

To crime and suicide. The whole was deep  
In myst'ry hid, and hinted at but here  
And there in whisper-words.

Suspicion stooped  
Perhaps, for him, and acted kind, compared  
With what it does by rule. It cleared him full  
Of part or knowledge in the wicked death,  
But held him to account for shame by which  
The crime was bred.

But few can tell, in truth,  
Suspicion's birth : all men suspect in some  
Degree, all women greatly most, yet most  
Deceived. Suspect is infant slander born  
And sucking at the breast of doubtful pride.  
Suspect of Rev. Nathan Field, pastor, —  
The clergyman spoken of, — began without  
A cause, and where, no one could tell. To find  
The source of such report, is wisely left  
Alone. My spirit brooding o'er the heart  
Begets a passion to traduce, to wound ;  
And people thus possessed can think and speak  
Of evils never done.

The talk broke out  
By women in his church. At first by two  
Or three the secret close was held. Alas !  
The women keep their secrets most by help.  
A secret's no light thing, — too much for one  
To hold. A woman's back is slight : she needs  
Decided help, and, most of all, when needs  
Must be to hold some naughty secret tale.  
In such a case they summon ready help ;  
The neighbors all turn out as volunteers :  
To slight their proffered aid would be unkind.  
Such is the way so many people hold  
What seems to them untold.

At first his church  
Was full ; then came a spell of dropping off.  
This gave the preacher pain. He said his prayers  
With double force and length ; but one by one,  
And two by two, he missed familiar names.  
To many empty pews he often preached  
And prayed. Each time brought more. His mem-  
bers shunned  
His presence, giving no excuse ; and, worse  
Than all, young ladies turned in cold retreat  
From every path he trod.

Poor Field ! he could  
Not preach. Disheartened by a thousand slights,  
He reached well-nigh despair. Beside all this  
Young Field had sorrow none could feel  
Or share. He truly loved sweet Nellie Waite,  
And sought to win her heart and hand ; when,  
    lo !  
She died in shame.

At length, distressed beyond  
All name, he sought to solve the mystery.  
To Mrs. Huntington, his friend both true  
And tried, he went to find relief. He thus  
Began : “ Good lady, tell, in Heaven’s name,  
What means this chilling wave of coldness in  
My church, — the members leaving one by one ?  
An explanation I will have, — must have, from  
    God  
Or man ! ”

“ Good parson, rumor says — There is  
A rumor quite unkind of thee : it floats  
Amid the air. No person says it all ;  
Yet all are saying some. The whole is bad  
Enough.”

“My friend, you fill me with surprise.  
Declare it all at once : the worst I’m bound  
To know. Say on, say on !”

“Some man will tell  
You what is said. It is not right for me  
To speak of matters half so foul : let this  
Be my excuse, I pray.”

“Good lady, tell  
Me all ! I must have quick relief. Let words  
Be guarded well, yet speak at once ; delay  
No more. Deny me this, and thou thyself  
Art guilty of traducing my good name.”

“You know the sudden death of Nellie Waite,  
And how she died in shame, by one unknown,  
Misled ; to cover which, she drank, and died  
By her own hand,” she said.

“I know, I know !  
But what of this ? That I’m the author of  
Her death, her sin, her shame ? Pray hurry on  
And say !”

“The author of her death? Oh, no!  
You wrong yourself somewhat. They say, or  
some  
Suspect, you planned and brought to pass her  
shame.”

The reverend Field was thunderstruck, dismayed.  
He turned away in rage, surprise, disgust,  
And half revenge, and half despair. I came  
That way by plan, and offered wine. He drank,  
And drank to drown his woe, but all in vain.  
His grief, unkind suspicion took for guilt,  
And shunned him more; from which he drank  
The more. And why record the end? 'tis all  
The same with all who drink.

XXI. — GRIEF MEETS GRIEF DISGUISED,

In my high calling labor must be love,  
Or shunned. I'm ruled by none. Whate'er I do,  
I do but for the joy it brings. With Field  
And Roger well secured, I planned to lead  
Them slowly on, whereby I might enjoy  
The work, and taint as many lives by them  
As pleased my royal wish.

On pleasure bent  
One day, I brought young Roger hand to  
hand

With pastor Field; the latter bowed beneath  
His load of grief, the former smarting by  
His inward guilt, yet each unwilling to  
Admit himself, in any sense, at my  
Command. Since this was so, I offered wine  
To both; and both partook, which pleased me  
much.

Their conversation pleased me more.

Poor Field  
Began: "Say, doctor, tell me how it is.  
I must believe in fate. Without a sin  
To stain my life, but this accursed drink  
In which I've sought to drown my woe,—  
But sought in vain,—I'm branded villain, fiend,  
And driven from the sacred desk to pine  
And die."

"Dear Field, you wrong yourself, and, worse,  
The God you preach. If guilty of no wrong,  
Then stand upright and bold, a man. 'Tis sin  
To languish or despair, or lose one's hope;

'Tis crime far worse than that with which they  
charge

Thee falsely. Be a man ! ”

“ Your words sound well,  
But do not fit the case. Were I as you  
A doctor, then they would apply ; but, as  
I am, they do not. Preacher’s name and fame  
Are sacred ground : whoever steps thereon  
To rob or to traduce, defiles the man, —  
If not with God, with men.”

“ Is there no way  
To clear yourself, and stand once more quite free  
From all suspecting taunts ? You preach that  
right  
Prevails, not wrong.”

“ There’s just one way, not more :  
In this I’ll spend my life, to win or lose.  
The prospect now is dark ; but hope invites,  
And I respond, and struggle on.”

“ What is  
That way, pursuing which, succeeding well  
Will set you free, and prove your innocence ? ”



“To track, detect, expose, and bring to law  
And chains, the author of poor Nellie’s woe  
And death. To this intent I live, and this  
Alone. In this succeeding, I shall die  
In peace. And, Roger, listen well. I here  
Predict I’ll find the man, and prove his fault.  
This day I’m on his track ; this day I meet  
Him face to face. Base Roger, you’re the  
man !

The author of her shame and woe, and, more,  
Her murderer by foul design ! No man  
Save me has knowledge of the deed ; and, armed  
With proof, I’ll bring thee to account.”

XXII. — ANOTHER CRIME CONTRIVED.

Young Roger turned from pastor Field in rage,  
And fear as well, but turned with oaths by which  
In vain reproof he strove to hurl, in death,  
The charges made. No time to lose : I flew  
To Roger’s side, and counselled what to do.  
I found him friendly, and all ready to  
Be taught. At times his body shook from  
fear,  
At times from rage.

He grasped my hand ; his mind  
In wild excitement flew from thought to thought ;  
Then half subdued, as watching out in fear  
Of being heard, he cried in smothered voice, —  
“The awful deed at least to one is known ;  
And how ? Oh that I knew, or he knew less !”

“Come, Roger, come ! Compose yourself : your  
mind

Is ill at ease. I thought you brave and true ;  
But coward thou dost seem. Be strong, and fear  
Nothing but fear. To falter now is to  
Be caught and hanged. To stand against each foe,  
With sword in hand, means conquest sure and  
quick.

Come, Roger, drink, to stay your nerves, and give  
Your mind more play.”

He drank. His nerves were firm,  
His mind as clear and cool. By these improved,  
I thought him ready now to hear my talk.

“One thing is certain, Roger, sir, — that Field,  
By some way hid from us, but wise (that’s plain),  
Knows of the deed by which fair Nellie fell.

This knowledge makes him fit to die, unfit  
To live. Just let him drink of Nellie's dose,  
And die, in people's eyes, as she hath died  
By rumor well confirmed. The crime enlarged  
Is more a crime, I must admit. But think  
Of wife and child, their name and fame. Should  
Field

Succeed in finding proof, — in which perchance  
He may, — you hang, and they in shame must live.  
Your only hope, your only chance, is held  
In one affair: the reverend Field must die, —  
Die soon. Consider well. How opportune  
The case! Suppose him dead by trick of  
yours

And mine: the people will declare his guilt  
The cause which led to suicide. What more  
Is needed to complete our plan, to make  
Success secure?"

"You reason well and sound,"

Young Roger said, "but deeper lead to crime.  
Is there no way of getting out, instead  
Of deeper in? I hate your plan, but must  
Relieve myself from him. Suggest your best,  
Your wisest plan, evading crime."

“No way

Presents to kill a crime, except by crime  
Again. If Field survives my plan contrived  
For you, expect swift woe. Good-day. I'm called  
Elsewhere.”

XXIII. — ELSA'S FEAR AND TRIAL.

“What keeps you out so late, my dear, — so late  
From babe and I? He waits with me for your  
Return, then falls asleep, or cries. I wait  
And hope, and hope and wait, expecting your  
Return. At twelve I fear; at one I doubt;  
At two you come to banish both, yet leave  
Me with suspect that all's not well. I wish  
In honor bright, my love, to know the cause  
Of this delay, which almost every night  
Confirms my fear.”

Thus Elsa pleaded, still  
In love, in hope, in prayer; to which, with blunt  
Reproof, young Roger did reply, —

“My wife,  
You fret and worry much beyond the need.  
A doctor's time is not his own. At ten

To-night, I rose to leave my office-rooms  
For home, when some one called in haste. A  
man

From over-drink had fallen from his horse,  
And broke his back, or hurt his spinal cord.  
I hastened to his side, and did my best  
To save his life. I called physicians to  
My aid, but all was vain : he died."

"My dear,

He fell from horse, and died, but died from  
drink.

May you not fall some other way, and die  
As well from drink? Think well! Your breath is  
strong,

Your eyes are red, your gait forebodes a fall.  
O husband! quit the drink of wine, I pray  
And plead!"

"Come, Elsa, stop! you quite, indeed,  
Mistake your man. I'm slave to no one here  
Or there; to drink, or thee. I rule myself,  
And go and come at will, and drink when drink  
I need. I hate complaining wives: complain  
No more to me. I'm sick of life, if life

Must needs be broils and faults. In peace my  
home

Must be, or home no more for me."

She wept  
And sobbed with grief. Poor Elsa prayed : she  
could

Do little else. The infant cried : it knew  
Not why, except because the mother cried.  
Young Roger sighed, and suffered more than all.

XXIV. — A PASTOR'S SUICIDE, SO CALLED.

"O ma ! did ever mortal see such awful news !"  
Spoke little Bess in great alarm, her eyes  
Intently fixed upon the "Morning Star."  
"That man who used to preach for us so nice,  
But since who fell to drink, to drown what folks  
Declared his guilt or sin, is poisoned by  
His own device. The paper calls it — Well,  
I'll spell it out ; its su-i-cide."

With such  
A fearful theme, the scandal-mongers thrived  
Right well. The story floated far and near ;

The children heard what parents said, and talked  
It o'er among themselves with eager taste  
For sensual food. No blame to learn what's taught  
By mother's tongue, yet often no less wrong.  
The pastor's death, so sudden, unexplained,  
Revived the talk of Nellie's fate. If doubts  
Were entertained before of preacher's guilt,  
They vanished now. The story went the rounds,  
In style this wise : " Poor Field, before the bar  
Of his own conscience proved in guilt, condemned  
To shame, and scorned by public eye, sank by  
Remorse, and sought relief in death. He'll meet  
The victim of his foul deception at  
The bar of God."

Such are my plans to bring  
To shame, eternal woe, the innocent ;  
To blacken virtue, honor, truth, and make  
The pure impure, — the object not so much  
My present joy, but more to people hell.

XXV. — FAIR ELSA'S SECOND DREAM.

At breakfast late, say nine o'clock, or more,  
Young Roger and fair Elsa sat, in no

Mean style. The home she made was rich and  
grand

With all that noble wife could do by taste  
Or means. The doctor read the morning sheet,  
And talked the news condensed to suit his wife.  
At length he found what he was looking for,  
And said, —

“ O Elsa, hear ! The parson Field  
Has suicided too. Last night, — this morn  
At two, I mean, — he drank some fatal drug,  
And died. Alas, alas ! that men will drink  
Themselves to madness thus ! How strange ! ”

“ My dear,  
I had a fearful dream last night. To keep  
It secret, I resolved ; but lo ! this news  
You tell relieves my mind somewhat. In this  
It is fulfilled, I hope and pray. The dream  
Was much the same, almost the same, as that  
Of which I wrote to you some months before  
We wed. I thought some one had poisoned me  
In manner much like this : I seemed to live  
Alone. At twelve o'clock, midnight, I sought  
My room for rest. It seemed so strange ! I had



Been drinking hard all day and night till then.  
I walked with reeling step ; my eye was dim ;  
I feared no one, nor cared for any thing :  
My thirst was great beyond compare. Upon  
The table in my room, a pitcher small,  
With water cool, awaited my return.  
How strange to say ! it seemed a custom old  
To find the pitcher there. I drank full half  
The contents down before I stopped, so great  
My thirst appeared. This done, I fell upon  
The bed. Then seized by fearful cramps, I  
groaned,  
And did my best to call ; but something tied  
My tongue ; my jaws grew stiff. The noise  
I made was dreadful. Oh, how great my pain !  
In this condition some half-hour I  
Remained. At length a lady came from fright,  
And rapped upon the door. I could not speak,  
Or rise to let her in. She called my name.  
I partly heard ; but much confused and in  
Much pain, I helpless lay. The door, by force,  
Was broken in. They found me at the point  
Of death, and ran for aid. Physicians came,  
But much too late. I died.

“This dream, my dear,  
So much akin to that I spoke of at  
The first, excited great alarm, and filled  
My heart with fear. The news you read ex-  
plains  
My dream, I hope. But why should I dream thus  
And so? Can you explain?”

“My dear, your dreams  
Are strange enough. The first you had the  
night  
When Nellie Waite committed death upon  
Herself; this one last night, — the fatal night  
For Field. These dreams keep sacred to thy  
breast, —  
To none reveal. They strangely point to what  
The people all suspect, — that he contrived  
Her death to hide her shame and his.”

“But why,  
My dear, should I have dreams so sad, so full  
Of woe? My sleep was haunted by the scene.  
I fear you read my dreams but half aright.  
They come to warn me of approaching woe,  
It seems to me.”

“ Pshaw ! Elsa, take some wine  
And egg. Beat well the egg, then mix with  
wine;  
Or brandy, better still. You need it much ;  
You’re weak, much indisposed, — the cause,  
perchance,  
Of all your dreams.”

“ My dear, you wrong yourself,  
And me as well. No brandy, wine, or egg  
Can cure in this. I feel a mighty wrong  
Is somewhere hid, and soon will come to light.  
By rule, I don’t believe in dreams : in these  
Of mine, I do. The preacher and the girl  
Whom all suspect of self-inflicted death  
Have died from other hands. I feel it more  
And more, — I cannot tell you why, — that he,  
And she as well, were true and pure and good  
Until misled, until abused. They fell by foul  
Design, is my belief.”

“ It may be so,  
My wife. Speak not of such abroad, I pray.  
The tongue of scandal now has work enough,  
And more : mix not yourself with this.”

“I fear

To mix in such a plot ; but, love, hear me.  
If intuition tells the truth, I'll mix  
In this against my will. It has some claim  
On us. Oh that it were not so !”

“Oh, pshaw !

The women always prophesy, and dream,  
And tell of coming woe. Elsa, adieu !  
Give me a kiss till I return.” This said,  
Young Roger left the house.

XXVI. — MY FATHER AND MYSELF.

Dear reader, turn a while with me, and leave  
The story partly told, of Roger's and  
Fair Elsa's fate, for other scenes : when done  
With these, again we'll trace their fortunes to  
The bitter end. My father and myself  
I'll speak of now.

I shall not speculate  
In thought, or dabble in deep themes beyond  
Demand. If what I write is dry, or lacks  
The juice of romance, still, I beg you, read ;

For, failing to amuse, I'll give, without  
Display of words, instruction rare, worth more  
By far.

At first let me repeat  
What all must know. My father, once in rank  
Exalted high, was God's chief counsellor,  
The premier of heaven. The story of  
His foul revolt, defeat, expulsion great  
Of him and all his host, is wisely told  
By Milton, not inspired less than those  
Who wrote divine. The same deep thinker  
pens  
My father's wisely planned attempt on man  
And wife in Eden placed. He tempted Eve,  
And Eve herself in sin drew Adam on;  
And both in sorrow fell.

Much later on,  
When mercy's scheme was ripe, a Saviour born,  
My father met the Son, and challenged him  
To fight. Three deadly rounds proved quite  
enough;  
My father fell, and fled back to his home,  
Away from light, the haunt of fiends.

He called

A council great, the greatest ever held,  
And wisest too by far ; so great, so wise,  
So full of great events, it marked the start  
Of a new era in my father's realm, —  
An era much the same, the start of which  
Was marked by birth of Christ.

The council did

Not rise for years : in study deep and long,  
Debates progressed in secret halls. At length  
My father, wisest of them all by far,  
His silence broke. He gave instruction deep  
And grand, at which applause was freely made.

“To meet the wise,” he said, “without defeat,  
We are compelled to meet them with their own.  
Wise only can confront the wise, and win,  
Or shun defeat. The High and Great whom once  
I served, in rank but one degree below  
Himself, has sought to pluck from me my gains  
At Eden's fight, by incarnation of  
Himself. In this great plan he links himself  
With man, and may communicate thereby  
With him, or he with Him, at will. This stroke

Means my defeat, unless with equal stroke,  
So much like his, I meet him on the line  
Of his own plan and thought, and thus divide  
The spoil.

“Let this be done. Like my great foe,  
I’ll bear a son, the incarnation of  
Myself. In him I’ll link humanity  
To my own heart, and lead the race as He  
Has planned to lead, by spirits’ power.”

I am  
That son, the equal too of him by whom  
I’m sent. And lo, I come to do his will;  
I and the father one; the spirit we  
Impart proceeds from both alike: we give  
On equal terms. Thus one in three, and three  
In one, triune, we stand complete.

XXVII. — WHAT INCARNATION IS, AND WHY.

This word is misapplied, and made to show  
Or signify much less than I perceive  
It means; or else we lack a word complete  
Enough to set forth clearly what I mean.

*Externalize* would do, perhaps, as well  
And better too, yet it's not broad enough.  
A cross between the two, embracing all  
That's signified by both, would do, and would  
Apply with equal force to matter and  
To mind, and both at once. But, of the two,  
I'll use the first, elastic quite enough  
To serve the end in view.

This world

Is full on every hand, miscalled by me,  
Of incarnation, — incarnate God,  
Incarnate man, incarnate devil too.  
The rocks, the hills, the seas, the stars, the  
sun  
And moon, the light, the heat, the air, and life  
In every form, are traces of the mind  
Of God, — his thoughts externalized. They show  
His work, his mind, portray his style and taste  
And skill, and disposition quite as much.

The ships that sail the mighty seas, the rail  
That spans the continent, the cars that roll,  
The cities proudly built, electric threads  
Of wire, girding earth to move our thoughts



By flash, — all these and thousands more ; the  
words

We speak, are traces of the mind of man,  
His thoughts externalized : they show his work,  
And imitate his mind ; they are the man  
Lived out, developed by the nerve and will.

The envies, spites, and quarrels, deceits, and crimes,  
The murders, suicides, and wars, and sin  
Of every sort ; the brandy, wine, and gin,  
Tobacco, and ten thousand other things, —  
Are traces of the Devil's mind, his thoughts  
Externalized. These are the Devil's secret plans  
Made manifest.

Thus God and man — not less  
The Devil too — are in a race, it would  
Appear, each bent on incarnation grand, —  
Externalize both new and great.  
The heart and soul of each are coming forth  
Revealed in things of form and shape, expressed  
Or made. In this grand race or enterprise  
I came, the Devil's great incarnate son,  
To mark hell's grand achievement of all deeds  
By far exalted most. Since hell began,

My birth of all events is greatest ; yes,   
By many times the chiefest thing of all   
My father's mighty works. To earth I came   
On mission grand and high and great, if viewed   
From devils' stand and aim.

XXVIII. — MY SON, THE SECOND BOSS.

To incarnate   
Myself I sought to do, on mighty plan,   
On mighty scale. My plan, excelled but by   
The sweep of its success, has filled the world   
With traces of my mind, with forms to match   
My soul in shape. My incarnation was   
Too wide, too great, to be confined to one,   
A single son : the plan required more,   
In number beyond count.

The chiefest of   
Them all, the second boss of devils has   
Become, although my son, grandson of him   
Whose will I do, who rules below. His name   
Is Debt. In rank on earth he's next to me.   
In crime of different sort, but quite as rich   
With spoils for hell, he spends his mighty power.

His royal sway extends to all mankind,  
But chiefest felt in the New World. His throne  
Is there, and there his form is chiefest seen.

To tell

But one of many deeds of his, by which  
He fills the earth with woe, I needs must write  
A book for that alone. To separate  
The man and wife, is not of small concern  
To us : in this he often prospers well.  
The home to undermine he seeks. To pull  
It down, and scatter all its sacred scenes  
Abroad, is his delight to do, and mine  
To see it done.

Of all my sons, I love  
This one called Debt the best. To him I lend  
Most aid, in him I take most pride. If e'er,  
As time rolls on, men should subdue my throne  
(Which cannot be while time endures), this son  
Called Debt, the second boss, must needs succeed  
To wear my royal crown, and rule as chief.  
He is beloved by better men than I,  
And has in human heart far more esteem.  
While I compel, coerce, enforce, he wins, —

Ofttimes the better way. But he's restrained  
By laws of men, which make his progress slow  
At times ; while I evade, defy, defeat  
The law, and run my course at will.

He gives  
Employ to many men, and grades, by ranks  
Or class, his help. The first, the highest of  
Them all, are lawyers, called by name. This  
class  
Include the wisest, smartest men of earth.  
They plead, in every case, in his behalf,  
On legal grounds, and give him greater speed.  
Among this class, the best of men, a few,  
Above the rest in skill, and versed in law  
The most, called judges to define their grade  
Of special rank, decide for him.

The grade  
Or class below the first is less esteemed  
And less revered, but feared somewhat the most.  
They go by many names, which people speak  
With awe. Constable, sheriff, and police,  
In turn they're called. Of other classes I'll  
Refuse to speak just now.

Thus held in high  
Esteem by best of men, and aided by  
Their skill, their laws, he prospers well, well earns  
The rank of second boss.

XXIX. — MY SECOND SON, AND BOSS THE THIRD.

My second son is great in being held,  
By men, of small account. By this he leads  
His victims unobserved. By much unlike  
His brother Debt, he seldom works alone,  
But mostly pulls in line with my designs.  
I often call him roper-in, for short.  
Admitted, often, where I cannot go,  
He talks of me in due respect, and makes  
Me many friends; and later on they call  
To see the father, in respect, of course, that's due  
The son.

This boss the third is stationed on  
The line that leads from me to honest, good,  
And sober men, half way between. If he  
Succeeds in finding favor at their hands,  
He seldom fails to bring them on for my  
Embrace. A go-between would be a name

Appropriate indeed, for whom you've called  
Tobacco or Cigar. The name I'll leave  
Unchanged to suit your taste.

This son, and boss the third,  
By climbing slow and sure, — yet not so slow  
When we compare success with proper speed, —  
Has reached great eminence, — a source, by no  
Means small, of revenue for nation and  
For state, and merchandise for safe and sure  
Investments. Thus he has become and is  
An element of power on earth ; in worth  
His value next to bread, compared with gold.

My son, this boss the third, is wise and shrewd,  
The wisest of my stock in some respects :  
His service I could part with little less  
Than life. No less the foe of man than I,  
Yet less regarded so, he gains no small  
Advantage thus. He makes demand for me  
By secret work, so well contrived that few  
If any e'er suspect his plan. He learns  
The child to smoke. This learned, the boy is half  
Way learned to drink. And smoking much cre-  
ates

A kind of thirst, that nought but rum can full  
Supply.

If men would crush the drink, let them  
First kill tobacco ; for, should they slay me  
And spare my child, but little then is done.  
Enough of this.

XXX. — MY CHILDREN AND MY WIFE.

My son called Debt, the second boss, I've spoke  
Of at some length ; as also of my son  
Tobacco or Cigar, boss third in line  
Of devils' rank. These are but two, by no  
Means all I have. The others I'll not speak  
Of now. Their numbers are too great by far.  
Their names, a list of which would more than  
fill

This book, I must omit to give ; but chief  
Among them are the cards, the chess, the dice,  
The keno, faro, and all games of chance,  
The race-course, and the bets that win or lose.  
All these, a thousand more beside, belong  
To me, were born to suit my will and serve  
My wish.

My wife, if wife she should be called,  
Or wife she is or was to me, of which  
I have my doubts, since if I call her wife  
I must abridge the term, or make her to  
Appear the mother of my children ; but  
If as wife she failed in this, then this  
Were all. With hand in hand, since I began  
My work at first, we've journeyed on as one.  
We make a perfect match. Each lacks and needs  
What each can give. Her age exceeds my own  
By many years ; yet, always young and gay,  
It matters not. With us, so well preserved,  
The greatest age improves our youth the best.

She shares the rank of boss with me. We reign  
Conjointly on a double throne. The crowns  
We wear are joined, attached, — an emblem of  
The perfect unity of aim and life which we  
Embrace. Her queenly robes in royal folds  
Entice, attract, and lend a charm by which  
I profit much. The millions bowing at  
Her shrine and mine are puzzled much to know  
Just whom they worship most, or most adore.  
A few, and few indeed, embrace my wife,  
And turn their backs on me, without respect



Enough to take my hand, or recognize  
My rank. A smaller number still make out  
To worship me, ignoring her. But all  
Mankind, with slight exceptions named, embrace  
Us both at once with equal force and love.  
The homage paid my wife the queen is much  
Improved if warmed by heat of mine ; again,  
The service paid to me is much enlarged,  
Improved, if gilded by the touch of her  
I love.

The world has given many names;  
All odd and queer, to designate my queen ;  
But one broad term is quite enough to make  
It plain : that term is Sensuality.  
On her I can depend for ready help,  
If help I need. At once both queen and wife,  
By some called Lust, she matches every wish  
And purpose of my life with counter-plot  
So well contrived as to secure success  
In every plan. Such is my wife.

## XXXI. — FAIR ELSA MEDITATES.

I'll speak more of myself, when farther on.  
But meanwhile let us turn again, and bring

The story of fair Elsa's life of love,  
And that of Roger's fate, to further issues.

Young Roger turned in rapid haste, and left  
The room. The dream fair Elsa told was more  
Than he could bear. Out in the morning air  
He felt relieved. Alas ! how soon he met  
The knowledge of his latest deed abroad !  
But let us leave him to his fate a while,  
And wait with Elsa in her solemn doubt  
And saddest fear.

A woman has a gift  
To understand what men would never know  
But by their aid. Fair Elsa had this gift  
On no mean scale. Her double dream, compared  
With double crime, gave fear that would not be  
Dismissed. She meditated long and deep ;  
Her fear increased by doubt and by suspect  
Of whom she could not, would not name.

Her doubts  
Gave birth to plan, and plan to bold resolve.  
She loved her husband more and more, despite  
His faults ; but, woman-like, she wished and longed

To know the cause of dreams which seemed real  
Facts. A thought! had Roger ever known  
Poor Nellie Waite, so long since dead? Perhaps  
He had; and if — what then? The answer was  
Beyond her depth of thought. She did not care  
To ask of him without excuse; excuse  
Could not be had.

Bethinking of a trunk  
Long since neglected, stored away, unused,  
Once kept by Roger ere he wed; and led  
By strange impulse of doubt and fear, she bade  
The servant mind the babe, and went in search.  
The trunk was locked, which made a double need  
Why she should look within. With many keys  
She tried and tried: at length one turned the bolt.

XXXII. — ROGER DISSECTING HIS VICTIM'S BODY.

Young Roger scarcely reached his business rooms  
Down town, when summoned by the law he stood,  
Dissecting-knife in hand, before the corpse  
Of pastor Field. The jury wished to make  
Post-mortem sure and deep. In order to  
This end, the stomach must be taken out,

Its contents then revealed by doctor's test.  
This duty to perform, the nearest man  
Who practised allopathic school was called, —  
And called, as fate would have it done, the man  
By whose own hand, in base design, poor Field  
Had died.

“And must I come to this, to cut  
The body of my victim, dead, — distort  
And mangle him whom I have slain? It is  
Too much for me,” said Roger to himself,  
Before he drew the knife upon the corpse,  
While standing by its side, full face to face  
With him so cold in cruel death.

Had I  
Not hastened to his aid, the task were far  
Too much for Roger's nerve. He drank and drank  
Again, and rallied to the work : to fail  
In this attempt would put suspicion on  
His track. He cut the blackened flesh, made black  
By pains of death. The work was worth his life  
To do ; but by my aid he struggled through  
In wretched style, — a style that would have put  
The jury on his track, had they not called  
It fruits of over-drink.

From evidence

Secured by witnesses and by the test  
The doctor made, the verdict came. They one  
And all agreed to call it suicide.

Poor Roger washed his hands, but could not make  
Them white. The blood for vengeance cried, in  
stains

That could not be removed. His head was bowed  
In shame, his heart in guilt. His brain reeled  
to

And fro, beyond control. Life was not life, —  
But aches, and pains, and fears, and doubts, and  
shocks,

And fearful expectation of result.  
He would that he could die, if dying might  
Release him from his woe.

His ruin was

Complete. I laughed with joy, in pride, at all,  
And left him to his fate. Why spend my time  
On him, a wreck? Fair Elsa I must win  
To shame and death, their children unto woe  
And shame as well. With this to do, and more,  
With all my work outstretching wide as man,

I must leave Roger now ; but taking leave  
I'd give him one more call.

XXXIII. — FAIR ELSA'S DISCOVERY.

The trunk I spoke of just before revealed,  
When open, much ; but all of no account,  
It would appear, until the search was done,  
When carelessly her hand disturbed a till :  
In this a single letter lay, addressed  
In female hand, with Roger's name.

'Twas more

Than she could bear. . With woman's mind to  
know,  
She opened quick, and read ; and thus it ran : —

“ O Roger, come to my relief ! come soon,  
I pray. This sin is yours as much as mine,  
And more : I fell in your embrace. What will  
I do ? You said you knew enough to save  
Me from results. In this you failed, or will  
Fail soon unless you haste. Prepare, I pray,  
Some medicine, in taking which I may  
O'ercome the deed you forced me to commit.  
I'll call to-morrow eve at five. Please meet

Me at your office-door, and pass the dose  
Unseen to me."

In Roger's wild affright,  
Excited by his first resolve to give  
Her poison, he forgot to burn the note  
We just have read, but dropped it in his trunk ;  
And there it lay for years untouched, unseen,  
Unthought of too.

The note fair Elsa read  
Once more. The shock she could not bear. What  
it  
Revealed, when aided by her dreams, was plain  
Indeed. She took her bed, and tried to pray,  
But all in vain. The letter she concealed,  
Securely hid. The servant tried to soothe  
Her mind, console her heart : that, too, was vain :  
She only cried the more, and groaned with pain  
In greater stress.

At length when Roger came  
She said, "*My dream, my dream !* it haunts me  
much.  
It will not be dismissed. O Roger, tell  
Me what it means !"

“Oh, fudge ! you dream and fret,  
And fuss too much. Arise, let's dine. Shake off  
This nightmare ! Come, be ladylike !”

“Alas !

Dear Roger, take your seat upon this stool.  
Shut to the door, and let us speak of things  
Not safe for other ears to hear.”

He closed  
The door at her request, and, trembling like  
A leaf from fear, knelt by her side, and asked, —  
“What means your strange request ?”

“O Roger ! let  
Me ask of you a question hard. Say not  
That I am childish in this wish, but grant  
Me my request. I long to know !”

“Of course,  
My child : ask on. What can it be ? what makes  
You tremble thus ? why fear so much ?”

“I fear ?  
Why, Roger, you fear more, and tremble more.



Explain the cause of this, I pray: why should  
This be?"

"Because your fear excites my own.  
Aside from this, I've been dissecting Field's  
Cold form, to find the drug from which he died.  
It moved my nerves. That's all: ask on."

"Well, tell  
Me this: Did you know Nellie Waite, who died  
Some years ago, from poison drank, — who died  
The night of my first awful dream?"

"I did.  
That is, I saw her pass from day to day;  
And may have met her once or twice, not more,  
At hall or church. But why this question,  
pray?"

"O husband, that's not all! Confess the truth,  
I pray. My heart is breaking fast. My love  
For thee is stronger as I sink: I'll love  
Till death; but, ere this monster deed shall  
break  
My heart, confess to me the truth."

“What truth  
Shall I confess? Explain yourself! Be quick!  
What mystery hid from me is this that tears  
Thy breast? I’ll stand suspense no more.”

“Shall you  
Confess to me, or I reveal to you  
What you already know? Come, husband, tell  
The whole to me, your truest friend, your wife.  
What secret should you keep from me?”

XXXIV. — I PAUSE, MY WORK REVIEW.

I’m anxious that in giving Elsa’s fate,  
And telling Roger’s end, the reader will  
Become informed of me, and how I work  
The work of woe and death. In order to  
This end, I’ll change a while, and speak more of  
Myself. Returning soon, we’ll bring the tale  
Begun to scenes of greater woe.

I’ll show  
You how I work the work of sin and death.  
'Tis easy told, yet hard to understand.  
I’m not confined to any place, or time,

Or special form : all times and places are  
At my command, all forms and shapes I own.  
I work on system well contrived, and well  
Arranged, adapted well to human wants  
And human weakness. I begin on men  
While yet unborn. As God has linked himself  
To man by his grand scheme, uniting two —  
The natures human and divine — in one,  
And giving course for spirit force to flow  
From heart of God to heart of man, the last  
To warm and bless thereby, — so I by birth  
Contrived, by incarnation fixed and done,  
Have linked the Devil's heart with heart of man,  
And made a track or cord on which may flow  
The Devil's spirit from the mint of hell,  
Where it is forged to fill the Devil's heart,  
To hearts of men ; and, flowing fast and broad  
And warm, has well infused the stock of man.  
But few can boast complete exception from  
My blood. There's scarce a man or maid on  
earth  
In whose pent veins some drop of blood sur-  
charged  
With breath of mine, flows not. If not received  
By my embrace themselves, they brought it with

Them by their birth, from mother's veins. Thus  
man

Has mixed his nature with my own, by hell's  
Wise scheme of fiendish incarnation of  
My birth before described.

I live and work  
Opposed to Christ. He is my foe by birth,  
By nature too. We met in conflict sore,  
And fought alone. He left me prostrate on  
The sands of that wild wilderness in which  
He fasted forty days and nights. I rose  
Resolved to conquer yet, or, failing this,  
To capture half the spoils of earth. We meet,  
The two incarnate sons. Our weapons are  
The same, only reversed : the truth his sword ;  
The lie is mine ; and both are wielded by  
A spirit sent.

Men love, embrace us both,  
And hate us both. On this we are at par,  
With difference yet in favor of my case.  
My latest dodge has been to dress in white,  
To imitate the saint of God, and, armed  
With a physician's recommend, to gain

Admission to the Saviour's ranks. In this  
I meet with great success, and push with ease  
My trusted subjects in as born of God.

From first to last has been my plan and aim  
To follow each design of Christ, my foe,  
And meet him everywhere on line with his  
Own scheme. He sent forth preachers: so  
have I.

He builds and sets a house apart to teach  
His way and will: I've ten to one of his.  
He bands mankind in circles held in form  
By cords of love and fellowship: in this  
I more than match him everywhere.

In Boston, Mass., his churches number up  
To fifty-five and more. In that same Hub  
Mine number thousands nearly three. In this  
I am ahead, you see, by far. Again,  
The numbers that attend on his are few  
Compared with those who come in multitude  
To worship at my shrine. But why compare?  
If numbers tell, — and count them here on  
earth  
Or down in hell, — I've far outran my foe.

The fall of Elsa, and of Roger too,  
The fate of Nellie Waite, and doom of Field,  
Are only sparks that fly from my machine  
Which turns out human woe.

XXXV. — POOR ROGER'S CONFESSION.

Young Roger, though by Elsa pressed with tears,  
Would not confess, but stoutly met the whole  
With cunning artifice. Alas! How soon  
His race was run! Suspicion fell on him;  
And, e'er he knew the rumor was afloat,  
Detectives got the proper thread, and, stitch  
By stitch, unravelled back, revealing all  
The crime. Young Roger, bound in chains, was  
cast

By cruel hands behind unyielding bars  
Of iron stout and strong, to try his hand  
At prison life, and wait the coming trial.

This gave him time to meditate, to weigh  
The case. I sought admission to his cell.  
The jailer would not let me in, in form;  
And so I sent my spirit, to request  
A message stating what, if aught, my hand

Might do. I did this but to mock his woe.  
He howled with pain.

The trial soon came on.  
I stood in high esteem with judge, and with  
The counsel for the state, and for the man  
Arraigned. The jury, all but one, were friends  
Of mine. By this good fortune I was asked  
To take a seat beside the judge. I did,  
And was in greatest measure entertained.

The trial was short : the counsel finished soon ;  
The jury all agreed that he commit  
The crimes, and, thus believing, said through one  
Who's styled foreman : " Guilty ! "

The judge pronounced, with great effect on all  
Who heard : " Young Roger, you have sinned  
against  
The majesty of law, and you must hang  
Until you die. May God have mercy on  
Your soul ! "

Young Roger wept, then nerved himself  
To die. The fatal day soon came. With rope

Around his neck, he stood about to take  
The last long leap, or plunge, that leads to hell;  
So full of me, he could not, would not, yield  
To God's demands, and bow repentant at  
His feet. He held out stubborn to the last,  
Or nearly so. But just before the rope  
Was cut, before the scaffold fell, they asked  
Him what he wished to say. His lips began  
To move and jerk by wild emotion's wave.  
He stammered out, —

“All men who hear or read,  
Give ear to me: I have a right to speak.  
My life to-day I give in answer for  
My crime. 'Tis just; but, oh that this were all!  
I give my soul to hell, to suit the law  
Divine: that is far worse. The crime for which  
I die, with which I'm charged, I did through ill  
Advice. I owe it all to drink: 'twas wine  
And whiskey led me on. Had I not heard  
To these, then I were free. Beware, take heed  
And warning by my life; avoid strong drink.  
To touch it is to die. To this cold world  
I leave my children dear, and wife who loved  
Me far too well. To God I would commend



Their lives. Oh, may they never meet the one  
They loved on earth, beyond the tide of death !  
But find a home beyond, above the land  
Of endless woe to which I haste, — a home  
With God. Again, beware of drink ! Good-by !”

The scaffold fell ; Young Roger struggled once,  
And died, and passed beyond the bounds of time  
To pay the debt a murderer owes.

XXXVI. — WORSE THAN ALL.

To pull fair Elsa down was most my aim.  
That Roger fell, I could rejoice ; but joy  
For me was incomplete while Elsa lived  
From sin. Her woe at Roger’s loss was no  
Small satisfaction : yet to see her thus  
O’ercome, subdued, was not enough. I gained  
In this. She came forth as a bride, all fair  
And pure, beloved, esteemed, and good. To-day,  
From deeds of mine, she stood a wreck in mind,  
A widowed slave to public odium.  
Once sought to grace and lend attraction to  
The grandest entertainments of the rich ;  
But now, alas ! evaded by the high ;

And shunned by those, beneath her real worth  
By far, she bent beneath my rod.

There were  
A few who sympathized, and came with hearts  
And hands to spread the down of sacred love  
And fellowship along her thorny way.  
But these were they who hate the sight and name  
Of me ; the few whom I have failed to bring  
Beneath my rod, whom my grand Foe has caught  
To fill the gospel net. I long in wish,  
And work in wise design, to conquer these ;  
But all in vain. And yet, why fret for these ?  
I have the most by far !

There's one last way  
To win a case, with me, which seldom fails.  
I move the multitude with dark suspect  
Of him or her whose life I seek to win  
For hell. There's nought so hard as to be  
thought,  
By honest folks, the friend to vice, the foe  
To good ; to be thought guilty of a crime  
From which you'd shrink with holy fear and shame.  
This mood breeds thirst for drink ; nay, more, a  
thirst

To leave the good, by which it falsely seems  
You are despised, and take the wrong by which  
You are embraced. 'Twas plan like this by which  
I caught the reverend Field. 'Twas plan like this  
By which I sought to ruin her, whose lord  
I led to blackest death before.

Two months,  
And scarcely that, had passed, when Elsa saw  
A strange neglect in all her friends. They came  
Seldom, and merely called to say "good-day,"  
And leave. Her heart, already well-nigh broke,  
Could ill put up with this. She must have one  
Or two true friends to lean upon, or sink.

To those who still remained her friends professed,  
She spoke her grief out plain, — a grief well-nigh  
Despair: "*What have I done? What have I done,*  
That all should treat me thus? That God would  
take

The children and myself to him!" In this  
Complaining way, despairing mood, she plead  
For consolation, help, or sympathy.  
But none of these they gave. No: poisoned with  
Suspicion's breath, they smote and blessed at once  
With either hand. They said, —

“Dear friend, beloved,  
Forsaken one, thy children and thyself  
Need care and love ; and both we bring, in full  
Supply to give. But tell us first, hast thou  
Contrived and played a part with him in crime,  
To aid thy husband on ? Didst thou assist  
Or plan in either crime ? Or art thou free  
And innocent ? Prove which of these thou art,  
And clear thyself of foul report, or prove  
It true. If pure and good, as we suppose,  
While many more deny, then count on us :  
If not, we leave thee to thy doom.”

’Twas quite  
Enough. Poor Elsa screened her face from view,  
Reclining motionless ; and made but one  
Reply, — her moans. They hit on these as proof  
Of guilt ; and colder grew, and bolder spake,  
Demanding explanation.

“Yes, ’tis hard.  
If thou hast sinned, or helped thy husband on,  
Then fail not to expect the grief, its sure  
Result ; and bitter woe, reward of crime.  
But answer, else thy moans we must infer  
To mean a wail of guilty grief.”

'Twas hard,  
Indeed, — too hard to bear. Poor Elsa moaned  
Again, — a requiem of woe, — and that  
Was all. She answered not a word.

Her friends  
Began to fear. One bent herself beside  
Poor Elsa's couch, and whispered words of  
hope.

The words were heeded not. The ear for which  
They came was closed to all without, that all  
Within might best be heard. This was an hour  
Of great solemnity.

The girl and boy  
Clung to the mother's skirts, in tears. The girl,  
The younger of the two, with sunny curls  
Just budding out, cried, "Ma, ma, take me up!"  
And reached its little hands in attitude  
Of earnest pleading. But the boy, somewhat  
More grown, had sense of shame and fear, he  
knew  
Not why; and hid his face, and cried aloud.  
To all the sinking mother answered with  
Repeated moans, as dying from despair.

Of all the devils I am boss. Of this  
I spake before ; and this you now may see  
In horrid order of display. To add  
Or multiply a woman's grief, a wife's  
Despair, a mother's woe, is that in which  
I prove my title to my special rank.  
All other grief but mine may be withstood.  
But that which I contrive will break the best  
Of human hearts ; will disarrange and craze  
The best of human minds.

By grief like this  
I slay those whom I cannot win, destroy .  
Those whom I cannot prostitute, or bring  
To degradation. And with grief like this  
I captured Elsa, by a plan as wise  
As black.

XXXVII. — FAIR ELSA'S DEED, OR MINE.

When left alone, fair Elsa rose, and closed  
The windows down, and shut the doors. She took  
The youngest child of two, a little girl  
But one year old, and clasped it to her breast ;  
Then held it up to God, and bade him claim

His own. In frantic mien, she pressed her boy  
The same. Then from a secret till she took  
The fatal phial, (obtained we'll mind not where),  
And mixed a dose for each.

This done, she knelt

And prayed : " My God, who knoweth all  
My woe, hear thou my prayer. I'm guilty of  
No crime, yet crime is in my heart, and crime  
I mean to do. My grief has reached a pitch  
I cannot bear. For me to live is shame.  
Reared by a holy mother's hand, I grew  
To love the right, and hate the wrong. By some  
Sad fate, I loved a man who loved the cup :  
That love has sealed my doom. A widow of  
A murderer, suspected too of crime  
Myself, I cannot longer live. I raise  
My hand to cut the thread that binds my life  
To earth. Oh, grant this as thy will ! To leave  
My children here, alas ! I never can :  
I'll take them hence with me to thee ; and, one  
In either hand, I shall appear. Forgive  
If this is sin or crime : to me it seems  
The right. If wrong, if sin enough to shut  
Me out from God, then take the children home ;

And send me down to join him whom I loved  
On earth, and, while I have this heart, must love  
In all the ages yet to come, in earth  
Or hell or heaven. If he must suffer there  
For evermore, to pay for crimes strong drink  
Induced him to commit, then, if I am  
To choose, give me my lot with him ; but take  
The children to thyself. Amen !”

This prayer —

If prayer it was — completed, Elsa rose,  
And sat herself to write the world a last  
Farewell.

“Adieu, cold, cruel world ! Farewell,  
I leave to-day, and take those whom I claim  
A right to take, — my girl and boy. To save  
Them from such grief as I have met, is cause  
Enough, excuse enough, for this. To give  
A reason further for the deed against myself,  
Would be to speak against accusers whose  
Vile accusations make my grief as hard  
To bear, as they are false. I die as free  
From crime, except the crime which ends  
My life and theirs I bore, as infant child.



Those who suspect me of complicity  
With crimes which proved my husband's death, I  
charge  
As guilty of all crime which I commit.  
God bless my ma and pa, and all the friends  
At home, — a home once dear, yet dear, but which  
I cannot mar by presence such as mine.  
I bid that home, and this, and all the world,  
Adieu ! ”

This note she left where all who came  
Would see and read. She dressed the little girl  
For bed, and gave the dose in full supply,  
Just after prayers were said. The boy was next  
Prepared ; and, taking his, was placed beside  
The girl. The mother drank the portion left,  
Intended for herself, and took her place  
Between the girl and boy, with head of one  
On either arm. In triune sleep they fell,  
To wake no more in time.

XXXVIII. — CONCLUSION.

To estimate  
The crime and woe I bring to man each year,

Just multiply the whole that I have said  
Throughout the pages of this little book,  
Five million times. The sum of this will fall  
Below true estimate of yearly gain  
To hell, from earth, by work of mine. To find  
The total sum of all I've done to man  
Since I began, increase or multiply  
The whole a thousand times or more, and still  
The half is yet untold.

If man were rid  
Of me, the earth would be a paradise.  
Nine-tenths of all the ills, of all the woes,  
That men inflict, would disappear, were I  
Dismissed. To rid the earth of me would be  
To conquer hell, to put an end to plans  
My father fitly makes. It can't be done !  
I challenge all mankind, the angels, and  
Their God, to drive me from the earth.

The law,

As made by men, has tried to prohibit  
My stay with them. A farce indeed ! I can  
Defy all men, all law, all powers, all states,  
And nations too. Not God himself has yet

Contrived a way — or if, his way is yet  
Untried — to put me down. I live, and work  
My work of death, defiant to all law  
And God.

A few, called temperance men, — a lot  
Of sorry fools, — assail my throne with blast  
Of trumpet to attract, with pledge and law,  
To bind them back from sin, and me from deeds  
Of crime. Their cause is good enough, — the best  
Of all but one except. But by a plan  
Contrived and put in force by me, the cause  
Has been disgraced by men below its rank.  
So much is this the case, that men of means  
And rank of honor, or of name, evade  
A place amid their ranks, and keep silent  
Concerning me, which means for me to thrive.

The temperance work, so called, has aims all right,  
But fails in wisdom to attain the right  
It seeks. Its plans are slim, unpopular,  
And weak. The men who seek to execute  
These plans are not the men for any work,  
Except a very few. They've left the church  
Of God because they could not lead or speak and  
pray

The most ; and sought another field in which  
Their talents to display. In this they make  
The most of what they have the least. They do  
More harm than good, "excepting here and there  
A man," more good than harm to me. These stand  
Between all danger and my throne.

Would men succeed  
In driving me from earth, let me suggest  
The plan. If wisdom such as mine has won  
The race this far, may not the same contrive  
A way to overthrow itself? Since all  
The efforts of all time, or nearly so,  
Against my crown have failed, I'll condescend,  
Myself, to tell what must be done to win  
In fight when I oppose. It may seem strange,  
That I impart advice against myself :  
It only seems. Advice against myself  
Will do no harm except you heed ; and heed  
You never will.

I must be fought by man,  
Assisted by his God, this way, if he  
Would win : The army must divide in two,  
A right wing and a left, — the right, the Church ;

The left, the world. I am a foe alike  
To Christian, Jew, and Gentile. Hence the  
Church

And man without the Church, should stand against  
My arms. The first, the Church, must take a step  
Of bold resolve, and make the pledge to keep,  
A test of membership. While Christians drink  
Without expulsion from the ranks of God,  
No hope is left to rid the world of me.

The second step the world must take, and form  
The army's strong left wing. It must provide  
A place, a time, a plan, at which, by which,  
The young, in social interchange of thought  
And word, may meet, and spend their leisure hours.  
Mankind was made for intercourse, as well  
For fellowship. Man cannot live alone.  
The sexes are alike in this. To meet  
Each other often here, and talk and laugh  
And joke, is simple nature working out  
Its grand designs.

I come to meet and cheer  
The stranger on his way, and find him friends.  
There's not a day of time in which, because of me,  
A thousand do not meet who never met

Before. I place their hands in mutual grasp,  
And call their names, and recommend their style.  
The Church of God is cold ; not by design  
Of God, but fault of men. Here people go,  
And starve for social bread, and turn away  
As from the chamber of the dead. They seek  
A place of smiles, of freely flowing words,  
Of kind remark, advice, and cheer. Do I  
Not furnish this, and more ?

Let him who would  
Die great in name, excel in deed of good  
For man, contrive a mighty plan, divine  
A mighty scheme, by which, in village or  
In town or city great or small, the young,  
And all who wish, may meet at will, at rooms  
And hall, where all amusements, sports, and fun  
Will give a bloom to health, and strength to mind,  
And wholesome cheer to every heart. Divide  
Or classify the whole, and make a place  
Where both the sexes, on a common plane,  
May share each other's inspiration. It  
Is lack of such a place, that makes demand  
For me. Until the world can give the joys  
That I impart, the world will drink for joy  
Which turns to pain. Not one in ten who drink,

But feel its wrong ; yet do they drink the less ?  
Nay, but the more. Then give a reason why  
They drink at all ! Just here your wisdom fails,  
And here I will explain. Men drink, as rule,  
To find a cheer, to feel a joy, to think  
In hope, that liquor gives : that's why. They do  
Not stop to think or care about results.  
Now furnish, if you can, a fellowship  
Enriched by melody, whate'er you will,  
To take my place, and I'll resign and quit.  
But until then the world wants me, and could  
Not well dispense with what I give ; though what  
I give is worse than death.

Young man or maid, whoever reads, take heed  
From what I say. Beware of me ! If young,  
Then all the more evade my path. Of those  
Who learn to drink in youth, by far the most  
Succeed in reaching woe, or early death.  
A few may drag their lives to ripe old age,  
But not the less to waste. No man is safe  
Who drinks. No man is wise who drinks. To  
drink  
Is to support a work of death ; to help  
The man who seeks to ruin you. With this

I'll dry my pen, and write no more. You have  
My first attempt to write a book : it's long  
Enough, and bad enough, but not so bad  
As I. Thus saying, reader, I withdraw,  
And bid adieu, but leave my card. Keep this :  
You yet may wish to call on me, to quench  
Your wicked thirst. If so, and you have cash, —  
But not unless, — I'll entertain you well  
With wine, or what is better still, — but which  
I cannot call by name without offence.  
I don't advise a call, but rather warn  
You not to come : yet all the same, and more,  
You'll come, and taste, and sin, and die at last  
In shame. Please keep this card, in case you lose  
Your way. I write it plain : —

THE BOSS DEVIL, — KING ALCOHOL.



## POSTSCRIPT.

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DEAR reader, have you heard the story of that Italian artist, who, meeting with a child of exquisite beauty, wished to preserve its features for fear he should never see such loveliness again? So he painted the charming face upon the canvas, and hung it upon the wall of his studio. In his somberest hours, that sweet, gentle countenance was like an angel of light to him. Its presence filled his soul with the purest aspirations. "If ever I find," he said, "a perfect contrast to that beauteous face, I will paint that also, and hang them side by side, an ideal of Heaven and Hell." Years passed. At length in a distant land he saw, in a prison he visited, the most hideous object he ever gazed upon, — a fierce, haggard fiend, with glaring eyes, and cheeks deeply furrowed with lust and crime. The

artist remembered his vow, and immediately painted a picture of this loathsome form, to hang beside the portrait of the lovely boy. The contrast was perfect: his dream was realized; the two poles of the moral universe were before him. What was the surprise of this artist, on inquiry into the history of this horrid wretch, to find he was once that lovely little boy! Both of these pictures, the angel and the demon of the same soul, now hang side by side in a Tuscan gallery.

Kind reader, you need not travel to a foreign gallery to see the transforming power of drink, and its attendant vices upon the body. That brazen-faced, wanton-looking wretch of womanhood was once a sweet, modest little girl, who blushed at the slightest indelicate allusion. That obese, bloated, brandy-burnt visage was once a joyous-hearted boy. I need not ask what strange alchemy has wrought this bestial transformation. They have been in the hard battles of appetite and lust, and carry the marks of their warfare. In the basement-cells of inebriety, and saloons of licentiousness, many youthful forms are sitting for their portraits. The demon artists of lust and intemperance are gradually moulding them into fiends. You may, young reader,

steal secretly into these hells of inebriety and harlotry. Your kind parents and friends may not suspect your waywardness, but your "sin will find you out." Vice cannot long remain concealed: the soul has no place to hide it. Soon the foul flame, through some rent or fissure of the body, will find expression.

Strong drink is the one great curse of America, of the world. Young lady, shun the wine-cup as you would a serpent; and fall not into the hands of the young man that loves his glass, lest you are bruised by his fall. Shun liquor, and you will shun three-fourths of all the ills of human life.



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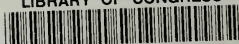








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